# THE REMEDY OF DISCONTENTMENT: OR, A TREATISE OF Contentation.

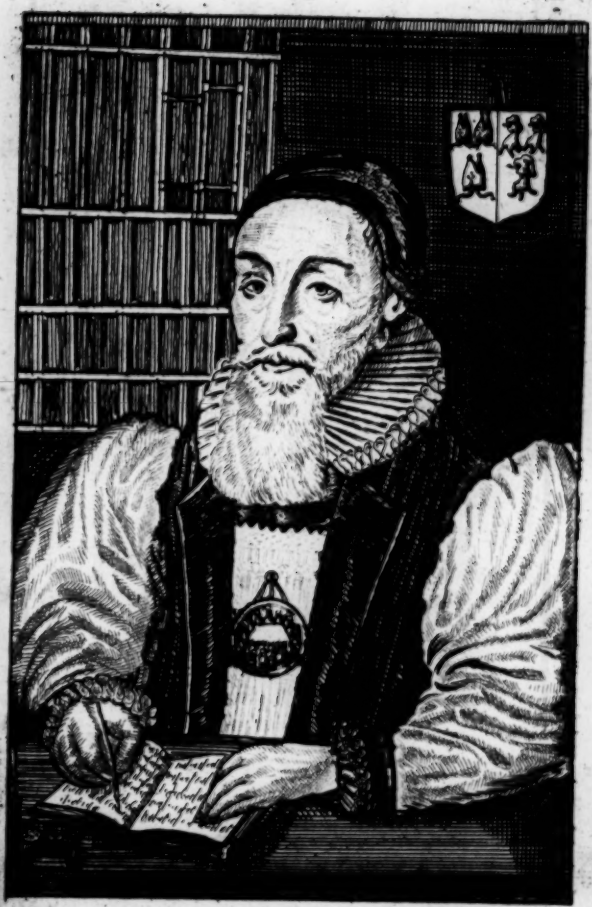
in whatſoever Condition.
Fitted for ſad and troubled Times.

By Jos. Hall *D. D.* and *B. N.*

*The Fourth Edition.*

Phil. 4. 11. *I have learned in whatſoever eſtate I am, therewith to be content.*
12. *I know how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound; Every where, and in all things, I am inſtructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to want.*

*LONDON:*
Printed by *G. Larkin* for *Obadiah Blagrave* at the *Bear* in St. *Pauls* Church-yard. 1684.



Vera Effigies Reverendi Dni
Josephi Hall Norvici nuper Episc:

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2 Ag 49 Traylen

# TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

*Grace and Peace.*

WHat can be more ſeaſonable, then at this time, when all the world is ſick of Diſcontentment, to give counſels & Receits of Contentation: Perhaps the Patient will think it a time ill choſen for Phyſick, in the midſt of a Fit: But in this

*case we must do as we may. I confess, I had rather have stayed till the Paroxism were happily over; that so the humors being somwhat setled, I might hope for the more kindly operation of this wholsom Medicine. But, partly my age & weakness, despairing to out-live the publick distemper; and partly my judgment (crossing the vulgar opinion for the season of some kind of Receipts) have now put me upon this safe and useful Prescription: God is my witness, that I wrote this in the depth of mine*

*mine own afflictions, (the particulars whereof, it were unseasonable to trouble the world withal) as one that meant to make my self my own Patient, by enjoyning my self that course of remedies, that I prescribe to others, and, as one, who by the powerful working of Gods Spirit within me, labour to find my heart framed to those holy dispositions which I wish and recommend to every Christian soul, If there be no remedy but the worst of outward troubles must afflict*

*us; it shall be happy yet, if we may find inward peace in our bosoms: which shall be, if we can reconcile our selves to our offended God; and calm our spirits to a meek undergoing of those sufferings, which the divine Providence hath thought fit to measure forth unto us: This is the main drift of this ensuing labour. Now the same God, who hath, in these blustring times, put into my heart these quiet thoughts of holy* Contentation, *bless them in every hand that shall receive them and*

*and make them effectual to the good of every soul, that shall now, and hereafter entertain them: that so their gracious proficiency may, in the day of the appearance of our Lord Jesus, add to the joy of my account; Who am the unworthiest of the servants of God, and his Church,*

J. N.

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The

# THE REMEDY OF Discontentment.

## SECT. I

*The excellency of* Contentation; *and how it is to be had.*

IF there be any happiness to be found upon earth, it is in that which we call *Contentation*: This is a flower that grows not in every Garden: The great

Phil. 4. 11.

Doctor of the Gentiles tells us that he had it; I have learned (ſaith he) in what eſtate ſoever I am, therewith to be content; I know how to be abaſed, & I know how to abound: Lo, he could not have takenout this leſſon if he had not learn'd it; and he could not have learnt it of any other then his Maſter in heaven: What face ſoever Philoſophy may ſet upon it, all Morality can not reach it; neither could his learned *Gamaliel*, at whoſe feet he ſate, have put this skill into him; no, he learn'd it ſince he was a Chriſtian; & now profeſſeth it; So as it appears, there is a divine art of *Contentation* to be attained

tained in the School of Christ; which whosoever hath learnt, hath taken a degree in heaven, and now knows how to be happy both in want,& abundance.

## SECT. II.

### *The contrariety of Estates wherein* Contentation *is to be exercised.*

THe nature of man is extreamly querulous; we know not what we would have, and when we have it, we know not *how* to like it: we would be happy, yet we would not die; we would live long, yet we would not be old; we would be kept in order,

yet we would not be chastised with affliction; we are loth to work, yet are weary of doing nothing; we have no list to stir, yet find long sitting painful; we have no mind to leave our bed, yet find it a kind of sickness to lie long; we would marry, but would not be troubled with houshold cares; when once we are married, we wish we had kept single; If therefore grace have so mastered nature in us, as to render us content with what ever condition, we have attained to no small measure of perfection.

*Si sedeas requies est magna labori; Si multum sedeas, labor est. Tert. Carm.*

Which way soever the wind blows, the skilful Mariner knows *how* to *turn* his sails to meet it; the con-

contrariety of estates to which we lie open here, gives us different occasions for the exercise of *Contentation*: I cannot blame their choice, who desire a middle estate betwixt want and abundance, and to be free from those inconveniencies which attend both extreams: Wise *Solomon* was of this diet; Give me neither poverty nor riches: feed me with the food of my meet allowance; Lo, he that had all, desired rather to have but enough: and if any estate can afford contentment in this life, surely this is it, in the judgment and experience of the wisest Heathen. But forasmuch as this equal poise

Pro. 30 8.

Senec. de Tranquil.

is hardly attainable by any man, and is more proper for our wiſhes, and ſpeculation, then for our hopes; true wiſdom muſt teach us ſo to compoſe our ſelves that we may be fit to entertain the diſcontentments and dangers of thoſe exceſſes, and defects, which we cannot *but* meet with in the courſe of our mortal life: And ſurely we ſhall find that both extreams are enemies to this good temper of the ſoul: proſperity may diſcompoſe us, as well as an adverſe condition. The Sunſhine may be as troubleſom to the traveller as the wind or rain; neither know I whether is more hard to manage of the two, a dejected

cted eſtate, or a proſperous; whether we may be more incomodated with a reſty horſe, or with a tired one: Let us begin with that which nature is wont to think moſt difficult; that contrary to the practice of learners, we may try to take out the hardeſt leſſon firſt. Let us therefore learn in the firſt place how to want.

## SECT. III.

*How many do not know how to want.*

COuld we teach men how not to want, we ſhould have Diſciples enow; every man ſeeks to

have, and hates to lack: could we give an Antidote against poverty, it would be too precious: And why can we not teach men even this lesson too? The Lord is *my* shepherd, saith *David* therefore can I lack *nothing* & most sweetly elsewhere, O fear the Lord ye that be his Saints; for they that fear him, lack nothing; The Lions do lack and suffer hunger; but they which seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good; Let God be true, and every man a lyer, Certainly, if we were not wanting to God in our fear of him, in our faithful reliance upon him, in our conscionable seeking of him, he whose

Psal. 23. 1.

Psalm. 34 9, 10.

whose the earth is, and the fulness of it would not suffer our careful endevors to go weeping away: But if it so fall out that his most wise providence finds it better for us to be held short in our worldly estate, (as it may be the great Physitian sees it most for our health to be kept fasting) it is no less worth our learning to know how to want; For there is many a one that wants, but knows not how to want, and therefore his need makes him both offensive and miserable.

There are those that are poor and proud; one of the wise mans 3 abominations; foolish *Laodiceans* that bear themselves for Eccles. 25. 2.

Rev.3.17. rich, encreased with goods, and lacking nothing, when they are no other then wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; These men know not *how* to want, their heart is too big for their purse; & surely pride, though every where odious, yet doth no where so ill as in rags.

There are those that are poor & envious; looking with an evil eye on the better fare of others; as surely this vice dwels more commonly in Cottages then Palaces. *How* displeasedly *doth* the beggar look upon the larger almes of his neighbour; grudging to another what ever falls besides himself, and misliking his own dole

dole, because the next hath more; whose eye with the discontented labourers, is evil, because his master is good; Neither do these men know how to want. Mat. 20. 15.

There are those that want distrustfully; measuring the merciful provision of the Almighty by the line of their own sense; as the *Samaritan* Peer, when in the extremity of a present famine he heard the Prophet foretel a suddain plenty; Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? 2 Kings 7. 2.

There are those that want impatiently; repining at Gods dealing with them, & making their own impotent anger guilty of a further

further addition to their misery; as the distressed King of *Israel*, in a desperate sense of that grievous dearth; Behold, this evil is of the Lord, what should I wait on the Lord any longer? And those wretched ones, who when the fourth Angel had poured out his vial upon the Sun, being scorched with the extremity of the heat, blasphemed the God of heaven: In this kind was that sinful techiness of *Jonah*: when I see a poor worm that hath put it self out of the cool cell of the earth wherein it was lodged, and now being beaten upon by the Sun-beams, lies wrigling upon the bare path, turn-

2 King. 6. 33.

Rev, 36. 9. 11.

turning it ſelf every way in vain; and not finding ſo much as the ſhade of a leaf to cover it; I cannot but think of that fretting Prophet; when wanting the protection of his gourd he found himſelf ſcalded with that ſtrong reflection; and looking up wrathfully to wards that Sun from whom he ſmarted, could ſay to the God that made it, I do well to be angry, even to the death. Jonah 4 9.

Laſtly, there are thoſe that are poor & diſhoneſt even out of the very ſuggeſtion of their want; It was the danger hereof that made *Agur* the Son of *Jakeh* pray againſt penury; Leſt I be poor, and ſteal: Pro. 30. 9.

and

and (by forſwearing it) take the name of God in vain.

## SECT. IV.

### *Who they are that know how to want.*

THeſe & perhaps others do and muſt want, but in the mean time they do that which they know not how to do; there is a skill in wanting which they have not; Thoſe only know how to want, that have learnt to frame their mind to their eſtate; like to a skilful Muſitian, that can let down his ſtrings a peg lower when the tune requires it; or like to ſome cunning Spagirick, that can intend

intend or remit the heat of his furnace according *to* occaſion. Thoſe, who when they muſt be abaſed, can ſtoop ſubmiſsly ; like to a gentle reed, which when the wind blows ſtiff, yeilds every way ; thoſe that in an humble obeyſance can lay themſelves low at the foot of the Almighty,& put their mouth in the duſt ; that can patiently put their necks under the yoak of the Higheſt; & can ſay with the Prophet, Truly this is my ſorrow, and I muſt bear it ; Thoſe that can ſmile upon their afflictions, rejoicing in tribulation, ſinging in the Jail with *Paul* and *Silas* at midnight; Laſtly, thoſe that can

Jer.10.19.

can improve misery to an advantage, being *the* richer for their want, bettered with evils, strengthned with infirmities: and can truly say to the Almighty I know that of very faithfulness thou hast afflicted me; Never could they have comne out so pure metal, if they had not passed under the hand of the Refiner; never had they proved so toward children, if they had not been beholden to the rod: These are they that know how to want, and to be abased; and have effectually learned *to be content* with *the meanest condition*: to which *happy temper* that *we may* attain, there will *be* use of, 1. Certain Considerations,

rations; 2. Certain Diſpoſitions: 3. Certain Reſolutions: Theſe three ſhall be as the grounds, and rules of this our Divine Art of *Contentation.*

## SECT. V.

### *The Conſideration of the fickleneſs of life, and all earthly Commodities.*

THE firſt Conſideration ſhall be of the juſt valuation of all theſe Earthly things; which doubtleſs is ſuch, as that the wiſe Chriſtian cannot but ſet a Low price upon them, in reſpect firſt, of their tranſitorineſs; ſecondly, of their inſufficiency of ſatisfaction: thirdly,

ly, the danger of their fruition.

At the best, they are but glassy stuff, which the finer it is, is so much more britle; yea, what other then those gay bubbles, which Children are wont to raise from the mixed sope and spittle of their Walnutshell, which seems to represent pleasing colours, *but in their* flying up instantly vanish? There is no remedy; either they must leave us, or we must leave them. Well *may* we say that of the *Psalmist*, which *Campian* was reported to have often in his mouth; My soul is continually in my hands; and *who* knows whether it will not expire in our next breathing?

thing? How many have ſhut their eies in an healthful ſleep, who have waked in another World? We give too large ſcope to our account, whilſt we reckon ſeven years for a Life; a ſhorter *time will ſerve; whilſt* we find the revolution of leſs then half thoſe years to have diſpatched * five *Cæſars*, and five *Popes*; nay, who can aſſure himſelf of the next moment? It is our great weakneſs, if we do not look upon every day, as our laſt; why ſhould we think our ſelves in a better condition, then the choſen veſſel, *who deeply proteſted to dye daily? What a poor complaint was that of the great Conqueror of the

* *Galba Otho Vitellius Æl. Pertinax Didius. Anno D.* 1275. } 1276. } *Gregor.* 10 *Innocent* 5 *Hadrian* 5 *Johan.* 20 *vel* 21 *Nicolaus* 3

* 1 Cor. 15. 31.

the Jews, *Titus Vespasian*, who putting his head *out of* his sick litter, querulously accused Heaven, that he must dye, and had not deserved it; when he might have found it guilt enough that he was a man; and therefore by the very sentence of nature condemned I know not whether to live or dye.

Indeed, what can *we* cast our eyes *upon*, that doth *not* put us in mind of our frailty? All our fellow-creatures dye for us, and by us: The day dies into night; the trees and all other plants of the earth suffer a kind of Autumnal mortality; the face of that common Mother of us all, doth at the least

leaſt in Winter, reſemble Death; But if the Angel of Death (as the Jews term him) ſhall reſpite, and reprive us for the time; alas! how eaſily may we have over-lived our comforts? If Death do not ſnatch us away from them, how many thouſand means of caſualties, of enemies, may ſnatch them away from us? He that was *the* greateſt *man of* all the Sons of the Eaſt, within a few days became a ſpectacle and proverb of *penury*, which ſtill ſticks by him, and ſo ſhall do to the worlds end, *As poor as Job*, Gen 15.10

The rich plain of *Jordan*, which over-night was as the Garden of the Lord,

is *in the* morning covered *over* with brimſton, & ſalt, and burning; Wilt thou cauſe thine eies to fly upon that which is *not*? ſaith wiſe *Solomon*: For Riches certainly make themſelves wings, they fly away as an Eagle towards Heaven: if we have wings of deſire to fly after *them*, they are nimbler of flight to outſtrip us and leave us no leſs miſerable in their loſs, then we were eager in their purſuit.

Deut. 29. 23.

Prov. 23. 5.

As for Honour, what a meer ſhadow it is? upon the leaſt *cloud* interpoſed, it is gone, and leaves no mention where it was: The *ſame* Sun ſees *Haman* adored in the Perſian Court, like ſome earthly Deity; and like ſome

ſome baſe vermine waving upon his Gibbet: Do we ſee the great, and glorious *Cleopatra*, ſhining in the pompous Majeſty of *Egypt*? ſtay but a while, and ye ſhall ſee her in the duſt, & her two Children, whom ſhe proudly ſtiled the Sun, and the Moon, driven like miſerable Captives, before the Chariot of their Conqueror: Man being in honour abideth not, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, he periſheth, but his greatneſs (as more frail then he) is oftentimes dead and buryed before him, and leavs *him* the ſurviving executor of his own ſhame. Pſal. 29. 4.

It was eaſie for the captive Prince, to obſerve in the Chariot-wheel of his Victor,

Victor, that when one *ſpoak* roſe *up*, another went down & both theſe in ſo quick a motion, that it was ſcarce diſtinguiſhed by the Eye.

Well therefore may we ſay of Honour, as *Ludovicus Vives* ſaid of Scholaſtical Divinity: *Cui fumas eſt pro fundamento*: It is built upon ſmoak, how can it be kept from vaniſhing?

*Ludo. Vives in 3. De Civit cenſura notatus Vellofillo.*

As for Beauty, what is it but a daſh of Natures tincture laid upon the skin, which is ſoon waſht off with a little ſickneſs? what but a fair bloſſom, that drops *off*, ſo *ſoon* as the fruit offers to ſucceed it? what but a flower, which with *one hot* Sun gleam *weltreth* & falls? He that had the choyce

choice of a thouſand Faces, could ſay, Favour is deceitful, and Beauty is Vanity

Prov. 31. Psal.

Laſtly, for Strength, and vigour of Body, if it could be maintained till *our* old age, alas, how ſoon is that upon us, ere we be aware! how doth it then ſhrivel our fleſh and looſen our ſinews, and cripple our joynts! *Milo*, when he lookt upon his late brawny armes, and ſaw them now grown lanck and writhled, lets fall tears, and bewraies more weakneſs of minde, then he had before bodily ſtrength: *but* how *often doth* ſickneſs prevent the debilitations of age; pulling his ſtrongeſt Man upon the knees, and making him

fesse, that youth, as well as child-hood, is Vanity.

As for Pleasure, it dies in the birth, and is not therefore worthy to come into this bill of Mortality.

Eccl.11.10.

Do we then upon sad consideration see and feel the manifest transitorinesse of Life, Riches, Honour, Beauty, Strength, Pleasure, and whatever else can be dear and precious to us in this world, and can we dote upon them so, as to bee too *much* dejected with *our* parting from them? Our Saviour bids us consider the Lillies of the field? And he that made both tells us, that *Solomon* in all his glory was not arayed like one of these Surely, full well are they worth

Mat.6.28.

worth our conſidering. But if thoſe Beauties could be as permanent, as they are glorious, how would they carry away our hearts with them? Now, their fading condition juſtly abates of their value; would we not ſmile at the weakneſs of that man, that ſhould weep and howl, for the falling of this Tulip, or that Roſe, abandoning all comfort for the loſs of that, which he knows muſt flouriſh but his month? It is for Children *to cry for the* falling of their houſe of Cards, or the miſcariage of that painted *gewgaw*, which the next ſhowr would have defaced. Wiſe Chriſtians know how to apprize good things accor-

ding to their continuance, and can therefore set their hearts only upon the invisible Comforts of a better Life, as knowing that the things which are not seen, are Eternal.

## SECT VI.

*Consideration of the unsatisfying condition of all worldly things.*

BUt were these earthly things exempted from that fickleness, which the God of Nature hath condemned them unto, were they (the very memory wherof *perisheth* with their satiety) as lasting, as they are brittle, yet what comfort

fort could they yield for the Soul to rest in? Alas! their efficacy is too short to reach unto a true *Contentation*; yea, if the best of them were perpetuated unto us, upon the fairest conditions, that this Earth can allovv how intollerable tedious would it prove in the fruition? Say that God were pleased to protract my life to the length of the age of the first founders of Mankind, and should (in this state of body) add hundreds of years to the dayes of my pilgrimage: Woe is me, how weary should I be of my self, and of the World? I that now complain of the load of seventy one years, how should I be

tired out, ere I could arrive at the age of *Parre?* but before I could climb up to the third Century of *Johannes de Temporibus*, how often ſhould I call for death, not to take up, but to take off my burthen, & with it, my ſelf? But if any, or all theſe earthly bleſſings could bee freed from thoſe grievances, wherewith they are commonly tempered, yet how little ſatisfaction *could* the Soul find in them; What are theſe outward things, but very luggage, which may load our backs, but can not lighten our Hearts? Great, & wiſe *Solomon*, that had the full command of them all, cries out, Vanity of Vanities, and a greater

Mo-

Monarch then he ſhuts up the Scene with, I have been all things, & am never the better: All theſe are of too narrow an extent, to fill the capacious ſoul of Man; the deſires whereof are inlarg'd with injoying, ſo as the more it hath, the leſs it is ſatisfied, neither indeed can it be otherwiſe; The Eye, and the Ear are but the Purveyors for the Heart, if therefore the Eye be not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear with hearing, how ſhall the heart ſay, It is enough? Now, who would ſuffer himſelf to be too much diſquieted with the loſſe of that, which may vex him, but cannot content him? We do juſtly ſmile at the

folly of that vain Lord, of whom *Petrarch* ſpeaks, who when an Horſe which hee dearly loved, was ſick, laid that Steed of his, on a ſilken bed, with a wrought pillow under his head, and cauſed himſelf (then afflicted *with* the Gout) to be carryed on his ſervants ſhoulders to viſit that dear patient; and upon his deceaſe, mourned ſolemnly for him, as if it had been his Son. We have laught at the faſhion of the Girles of *Holland*, who having made to themſelves gay and large Babies, and laid them in a curious cradle, fain them to ſicken and dye, and celebrate their funeral with much paſſion: So fond are we, if having framed

med to our selves imaginary Contentments here, in the World, we give way to immoderate grief in their miscarriage.

## SECT. VII.

### *The danger of the love of these earthly comforts.*

NEither are these earthly comforts more defective in yeilding full satisfaction to the soul, then *dangerous* in their over-dear fruition: For too much delight in them, robs us of more solid Contentments; The World is a cheating *gamester*, suffering us *to* win at the first, that at last he may go away with all, Our

Pſa.69.22 very Table may be made our ſnare; and thoſe things which ſhould have been for our wealth, may be unto us an occaſion of falling: *Leo* the fourth Emperour of *Conſtantinople*, delighted exceedingly in pretious ſtones, with theſe he imbelliſhes his Crown, which being worn cloſe to his Temples, ſtrikes ſuch a cold into his head, that cauſeth his bane yea, how many with the too much love of theſe outward things have loſt, not their lives only, but their Souls? No man can be at once the Favourite of God and the World; as that Father ſaid truly: or as our Saviour in fuller tearms, No man can ſerve two Maſters,

sters, GOD and Mammon: Shortly, the World may be a dangerous enemy, a sure friend it cannot be.

If therefore we shall like wise men, value things at their due prizes, since we are convinced in our selves, that all these earthly comforts are so transitory in their Nature, so unsatisfying in their use, and so dangerous in their enjoying, how little reason have we to be too much affected with foregoing them? Our blood is dear to us, as that wherein our life is, yet if we find that it is either infected, or distempered, we do willingly part with it in hope of better health; How much more, with those

those things which are farther from us, and less concerning us?

## SECT. VIII.

### *Consideration of the Divine Providence ordering all events.*

THe second Consideration is of that All-wise Providence which *ordereth* all events both in Heaven and Earth, allotting to every Creature his due proportion, *so over-ruling all things* to the best, that we could not want, if he knew it better for us to abound: This Station he hath set us in, this measure hee hath shared out to us *whose will* is

is the rule of good; what we have *therfore*, cannot but *be* beſt for us. The World is a large Cheſs-board, every man hath his place aſſigned him: one is a King, another a Knight, another a Pawn, and each hath his ſeveral motion, without this variety, there could be no game played; A skilful Player will not ſtir one of theſe Chips, but with intention of an advantage; neither ſhould any of his men *either* ſtand, or move, if in any other part of that Checker, it might be in more hope to win.

There is no eſtate in this World which can be univerſally good for all, one mans meat may be another

mans

mans medicine, and a third mans poyſon; A Turk finds health and temper in that Opium, which would put one of us *into* our laſt ſleep. Should the Plow-man bee ſet to the Gentlemans fare, this Chicken, that Partridge or Pheſant, would (as over-ſlight food) bee too ſoon turned over, and leave his empty ſtomach to quarrel for ſtronger proviſion: Beef is for his dyet; and if any ſauce needs beſides his hunger, Garlick: Every man hath, as a body ſo a mind of his own; what one loves is abhorred of another; the great Houſe-keeper of the world knows how to fit every palat with that which either is or ſhould be agreeable

able to it, for ſalubrity, if not for pleaſure: Lay before a Child a Knife, and a Rod, & bid him take his choyce, his hand will be ſtraight upon that edge tool, eſpecially, if it be a little guilded and glittering; but the Parent knows the Rod to bee more ſafe for him, & more beneficial; We are ill carvers for our ſelves, he that made us, knows what is fit for us, either for time, or meaſure, without his Providence not an hair can fall from our heads; We would have bodily health, I cannot blame us; what is the world to us without it? He whoſe we are, knows ſickneſs to be for the health of the Soul; whether ſhould we in

in true judgment desire? we wish *to* live, who can blame us? life is sweet, but if our Maker have ordained, that nothing but Death can render us glorious, what madness is it to stick at the condition? Oh our gross infidelity, if we do not believe that great Arbiter of the World, infinitely wise to know what is best for us, infinitely merciful to will what he knows best, infinitely powerful to do what he will! And if we be thus perswaded, how can we, but in matter of good, say with blessed *Mary*: Behold thy Servant, be it unto me according to thy Word: And in matter of evil, with good *Eli*: It is the

the Lord, let him do vvhat he vvill ?

## SECT. IX.

*Conſideration of the worſe Condition of others.*

IN the third place, it *will* be requiſite for us to caſt our eyes upon the vvorſe condition of others, *perhaps* better deſerving then our ſelves, for if vve ſhall *whine* & complain of that *weight*, *which* others do run avvay chearfully withal, the fault *will* appear to be not *in the* heavineſſe of the load, but in the vveakneſs of *the bearer* : If *I* be diſcontented *with* a mean *dwelling*, another man lives merrily in a lovv

thatched Cottage; If I dislike my plain fare, the four captive children feed fair and fat with pulse and water. If I be plundred of my rich suits, I see a more chearful heart under a russet Coat, then great Princes have under purple Robes, If I do gently languish upon my sick bed, I see others patient under the torments of the Cholick, or Stone, or Strangury: If *I* be clapt up within four walls, *I* hear *Petronous* profess, he had rather be in Prison with *Cato*, then at liberty with *Cæsar*: *I* hear *Paul* and *Silas* sing like Nightingales in their cages: Am *I* sad, because *I* am childless? *I* hear many a parent wish himself

Dan. 1, 12. 13.

himſelf ſo: Am I baniſhed from my *home?* I *meet with many of whom the world was not worthy,* wandring about in Sheep-skins, in Goat-skins, in deſerts, and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of earth: What am I that I ſhould ſpeed better then the miſerableſt of thee patients? What had they done, that they ſhould fare worſe then I? If I have little, others have leſs; If I feel pain, ſome others, torture: If their ſufferings be juſt, my forbearances are merciful; my proviſions, to theirs, liberal: It is no ill counſel therefore, and not a little conducing to a contented want, that great perſons ſhould ſometimes ſtep aſide

Heb. xi. 38.

aſide into the homely Cottages of the poor, and ſee their mean ſtuffe, courſe fare, hard lodgings, worthleſſe utenſils, miſerable ſhifts; and to compare it with their *own* delicate and *nauſeating* ſuperfluities: *Our* great and learned King *Alfred* was the better all his life after, for his hidden retiredneſs in a poor Neatheards Cabbin, where he was ſheltred, and ſometimes alſo chidden by that homely Dame: Neither was it an ill wiſh of that wiſe Man, that all great Princes might firſt have had ſome little *taſte*, *what* it is to want, that *ſo* their *own* experience might render them more ſenſible of the complaints

complaints of others.

Man, though he be abſolute in himſelf, and ſtand upon his own botom, yet is he not a little wrought *upon* by examples, and compariſons with others; for in them he ſees what he is, or may be, ſince no events are ſo confined to ſome ſpecial ſubjects, as that they may not be incident to other men.

Merit is a poor plea for any *mans* exemption, whilſt our ſinful infirmities lay us all *open* to the rod of divine Juſtice: and if theſe diſpenſations be meerly out of favour, why do I rather grudge at a leſſer miſery, then bleſs God for my freedom from a greater judgement?

ment? Thoſe therefore that ſuffer more then *I*, have cauſe of more humbling, and *I* that ſuffer leſſe then they, have cauſe of more thankfulneſs; even mitigations of puniſhment *are new* mercies, ſo as others torments doe no other then heighten my obligations, let me not therefore repine to be favourably miſerable.

## SECT. X.

*Conſideration of the inconveniences of great eſtates: and firſt of their cares, that they expoſe us to envy, and then macerate us with cares.*

THe fourth Conſideration ſhall be of the inconveniences

niences which do oftentimes attend a fulneſſe of eſtate; ſuch, and ſo many as may well make us ſit down content with a little; wherof, let the firſt be envy: a miſchief not to be avoided of the great; This ſhadow follows that body inſeparably; All the curs in the ſtreet are ready to fall upon that dogg that goes away with the bone; and every man hath a Cudgel to fling at a wel-loaded Tree; whereas a mean condition is no eye-ſore to any beholder: Low ſhrubs are not wont to be ſtricken with Lightning, but tall Oaks & Cedars feel their flames; Whiles *David* kept his fathers *ſheep* at home, hee might ſing ſweetly

ſweetly to his Harp in the fields, without any diſturbance: But when he once comes to the Court, and finds applauſe and greatneſs creep upon him, now emulation, deſpight and malice, dog him cloſe at the heels whereſoever he goes: Let him leave the Court, and flee into the Wilderneſs, there theſe bloodhounds follow him in hot ſuit; Let him run into the Land of the *Philiſtins*, there they find him out, and chaſe him to *Ziklag*; and if at the laſt, he hath climbed up to his juſt Throne, and there hopes to *breathe him* after his tedious purſuit, even there he *meets* with more unquietneſs then

then in his desert, and notwithstanding all his Royalty, at last cries out, Lord remember *David*, and all his troubles: How many have we known, whom their wealth hath betray'd, and made innocent malefactors? who might have slept securely upon a hard bolster, and in a poor estate out-lived both their Judges, and Accusers. Besides, on even ground a fall may be harmless; but he that falls from on high, cannot escape bruising: He therefore that can think the benefits of Eminence can countervail the dangers which haunt greatness, let him affect to overtop others; for me, let me rather be safely low, then Ps. 132. 1.

high with perill: After others envy, the next attendant upon greatneſs is our own cares; how do theſe diſquiet the Beds, and ſawce the Tables of the wealthy? breaking their ſleeps, galling their ſides, embittering their pleaſure, ſhortning their days: How bitterly do we find the holieſt men complaining of thoſe diſtractions, which have attended their earthly promotions? *Nazianzen* cries out of them as no other then the bane of the Soul; and that other *Gregory*, whom we are wont to call the laſt of the beſt Biſhops of Rome, and the firſt of the bad, paſſionately bewails this clogge of his high preferment: I confeſs

*G. Naz. Carm. de calam. ſuis.*

seſs, saith he, that while I am outwardly advanced, I am inwardly fallen lower: this burdensome honour depresses me, and innumerable cares disquiet me on all sides; my mind (grown almost stupid with those temporall cares which are ever barking in mine ears) is forced upon earthly things; thus he: There are indeed cares which as they may be used, may help us on towards Heaven; such as *Melanchthon* owns to his *Camerarius*; My cares, saith he, send me to my prayers, and my prayers dispel my cares; but those anxieties which commonly wait upon greatness, distract the mind, and impare the body.

*Greg. l. 7. Epi. 12. 7.*

*In vita Melanct.*

It is an obſervation of the Jewiſh Doctors, that *Joſeph* the Patriarch was of a ſhorter life then the reſt of his brethren; and they render this reaſon of it, for that his cares were as much greater, as his place was higher: It was not an unfit compariſon of him, who reſembled a Coronet upon the Temples, to a Paile upon the Head; We have ſeen thoſe who have carryed full and heavy veſſels on the top of their heads, but then they have walked evenly, and erect under that load; we never ſaw any that could dance under ſuch a weight; if either they bend, or move vehemently, all their cariage is ſpilled: Earthly greatneſs

*Shicardus.*

nesse is a nice thing, and requires so much charinesse in the managing, as the contentment of it cannot requite; He is worthy of honey, that desires to lick it off from thorns; for my part, I am of the mind of him who professed, not to care for those favours, that compelled him to lie waking.

## SECT. XI.

*Danger of distemper, both bodily and spiritual, that commonly follows great means: and torment in parting with them.*

IN the next place, I see greatnesse not more pale,

and worn with cares, then ſwoln up, and ſickly with exceſs; Too much oyl poured in, puts out the Lamp: Superfluity is guilty of a world of diſeaſes, which the ſpare diet of poverty is free from; How have we ſeen great mens eyes ſurfeited at that full Table, whereof their palate could not taſte, and they have riſen diſcontentedly glutted with the ſight of that, which their ſtomach was uncapable to receive; and when, not giving ſo much law to nature, as to put over their gluttonous meal, (their wanton appetite charging them with a new variety of curious morſels, and laviſh cups) they

they find themſelves overtaken vvith ſeaverous diſtempers, the Phyſitian muſt ſucceed the Cook; and a ſecond ſickneſs muſt cure the firſt: But alas, theſe bodily indiſpoſitions are nothing to thoſe ſpiritual evils, vvhich are incident unto ſecular greatneſs. It is a true word of S. *Ambroſe*, ſeconded by common experience, that an high pitch of honour is ſeldom held up without ſin; And S. *Jerome* tells us, it was a common Proverb in his time, That a rich man either is wicked, or a wicked mans heir: Not, but that rich *Abraham* may have a boſom for poor *Lazarus* to reſt in, and many great

*Ambroſ. l. 4. Epiſt. 29.*

*Hieron. Ep. ad Hedibium.*

Kings have bin great Saints in Heaven, and there is ſtill room for many more; but that commonly great temptations follow great eſtates, & oftentimes overtake them; neither is it for nothing, that riches are by our bleſſed Saviour ſtyled the Mammon of Iniquity, and wealth is by the holy Apoſtle branded with deceitfulneſs; ſuch as cheat many millions of their Souls.

1. Tim. 6.

Add unto theſe (if you pleaſe) the torment of parting with that pelf, and honour, which hath ſo groſly bewitched us; ſuch as may well verifie that which *Lucius* long ſince wrote to the Biſhops of *France*, and *Spain*, that one houres miſchief makes

*Ep. Lucii ad Epiſc. Gall. & Hiſp.*

makes us forget the pleasure of the greatest excess. I marvel not at our English Jew, of whom our story speaks, that would rather part with his teeth, then his bags: how many have we known that have poured out their life together with their gold, as men that would not outlive their earthen god; yea (woe is me) how many souls have been lost in the sin of getting, and in the quarrel of losing this thick clay, as the Prophet terms it? But lastly, that which is yet the sorest of all the inconveniences, is the sadness of the reckoning, which must come in after these plentifull entertainments; for there is none

of all our cares here, but must be billed up; and great Accompts must have long Audits: how hard a thing it is in this case, to have an *Omnia æquè*? In the failing whereof, how is the Conscience affected? I know not whether more tormented, or tormenting the miserable soul; so as the great Owner is but (as witty *Bromiard* compares him) like a weary Jade, which all the day long hath been labouring under the load of a great treasure; and at night lies down with a galled back.

By that time therefore we have summed up all, and find here envy, cares, sicknesses both of body & soul, torment in parting with, and more

more torment in reckoning for, theſe earthly greatneſſes; we ſhall be convinced of ſufficient reaſon to be well apaid with their want.

## SECT. XII.

*Conſideration of the benefits of Poverty.*

LEt the fifth Conſideration be, the benefits of Poverty; ſuch, and ſo great, as are enough to make us in love with having nothing.

For firſt, what an advantage is it, to be free from thoſe gnawing cares, which (like *Tityus* his Vulture) feed upon the Heart of the Great? Here is a man that ſleeps

(*Æthiopian*

(*Æthiopian*-like) with his doors open; no dangers threaten him, no feares break his reſt; he ſtarts not out of his bed at midnight, and cries Theeves, he feels no rack of ambitious thoughts, he frets not at the diſappointment of his falſe hopes, he cracks not his brain with hazardous plots, he miſ-doubts no undermining of emulous rivals, no traps of hollow friendſhip, but lives ſecurely in his homely Cottage, quietly enjoying ſuch proviſion, as Nature and honeſt Induſtry furniſh him withall; for his drink, the neighbour Spring ſaves him the charge of his Exciſe; and when his better earnings have

fraught

fraught his trencher with a warm and pleasing morsel, and his cup with a stronger liquor, how chearfully is he affected with that happy variety; and in the strength of it digests many of his thinner meals?

Meales usually sawced with an healthfull hunger, wherein no incocted Crudities oppress Nature, and cherish disease: Here are no Gouts, no Dropsies, no Hypochondriack passions, no Convulsive fits, no distempers of Surfets, but a clear and wholsome vigor of body, and an easie putting over the light tasks of digestion, to the constant advantage of health.

And as for outward dangers,

gers, what an happy immunity doth commonly bleſs the poor man? How can he fear to fall, that lies flat upon the ground? The great Pope, *Boniface* the ſeventh, when he ſaw many ſtately Buildings ruined with Earthquakes, is glad to raiſe him a little Cabin of boards in the midſt of a Meadow, and there findes it ſafeſt to ſhelter his triple Crown. When great men hoiſt their Top-ſail, and launch forth into the deep, having that large clew which they ſpread, expos'd to all windes, and weathers, the poor man ſails cloſe by the Shore; and when he foreſees a ſtorm to threaten him, puts into the next Creek;

Creek; and wears out in a quiet ſecurity that Tempeſt, wherein he ſees prouder Veſſels miſerably toſt, and at laſt, fatally wrecked.

This man is free from the peril of ſpightful machinations; No man whets his Axe to cut down a ſhrub, it is the large Timber of the world that hath cauſe to fear hewing: Neither is he leſs free inwardly from the galling ſtroaks of a ſelf-accuſing Conſcience; here is no remurmuring of the heart for guilty ſubornations, no checks for the ſecret contrivances of publique villanies; no heart-breaking for the failings of bloudy deſignes; or late remorſe for their ſucceſs; but quiet,

quiet & harmleſs thoughts of ſeaſonable frugality, of honeſt recreation, with an un interrupted freedom of recourſe to Heaven.

And if at any time, by either hoſtile, or caſual means, he be bereſt of his little, he ſmiles in the face of a theef; and is no whit aſtoniſhed to ſee his thatch on a flame, as knowing how eaſie a ſupply will repair his loſs.

And when he ſhall come to his laſt cloſe, his heart is not ſo glewed to the world, that he ſhould be loth to part; his ſoul is not tyed up in bags, but flies out freely to her everlaſting Reſt. Oh the ſecret vertue and happineſs of Poverty! which

which none but the right diſpoſed mind knows how to value! It was not for nothing that ſo many great Saints have embraced it, rather then the rich profers *of* the world; That ſo many great Princes have exchanged their Thrones for quiet Cells; VVho ſo cannot be thankful for a little, upon theſe conditions, I wiſh he may be puniſhed wiih abundance.

## SECT. XIII.

*Conſidering how little will ſuffice Nature.*

NEither will it a little avail *to* th' *furtherance* of our *Contentation*, to conſider

sider how little will suffice Nature, and that all the rest is but matter of Opinion: *It* is the Apostles charge, Having food and raiment, let us be *therewith* content: *Indeed* what use is there of more, then what may nourish us within, and cover *us* without? *If* that be wholsome, and agreeable to our bodily disposition, whether it be fine, or course, Nature passes not; it is meerly Will that is guilty of this wanton, and fastidious choice; *It* is fit that Civility should make difference of clothings; and that weakness of body, or eminence of Estate should *make difference of* diets; Else, *why* not Russet as well as Scarlet? Beef, as Phesant?

1 Tim. 6. 9.

Pheſant? the Graſhopper feeds on dew, the Chameleon on air, what care they for other Viands? Our Books tell us, that thoſe *Anachorets* of old, that went aſide into Wilderneſſes, and ſuſtained themſelves with the moſt ſpare diet, ſuch as thoſe deſerts could afford, out lived the date of other mens lives, in whom Nature is commonly ſtifled with a gluttonous variety: How ſtrong, and vigorous above their neighbour Grecians, were the Lacedemonians held of old? who by the Ordinance of their Law-giver, held themſelves to their black broth, which when *Dionyſius* would needs taſte of, his Cook truly told him,

*Paulo primo Eremitae in ſpelunca viventi palma & cibum & veſtimentum praebebat; quod cum impoſſibile videatur, Je. ſum teſtor & Angelos vidiſſe me Monachos, de quibus unus per 30. annos clauſus, hordeaceo pane & lutulenta aqua vixit. Hieron. de vita Pauli. Revelatur Antonio nonagenario, de Paulo agente jam 113. annum, eſſe alium ſe ſanctiorem Monachum, ibid.*

him, that if he would reliſh that fare, he muſt exerciſe ſtrongly, as they did, and waſh in *Eurotus*: Who knows not that our Iſland doth not afford more able Bodies, then they that eat, and drink Oates? And whom have we ſeen more healthful and active, then the Children of poor men, trayned up hardly in their Cottages with fare as little, as courſe?

Do I ſee a poor Indian husbanding one tree to all his houſhold uſes; finding in that one Plant; Timber, Thatch, Meat, Medicine, Wine, Honey, Oyl, Sauce, Drink, Utenſils, Ships, Cables, Sayls? and do I rove over all the latitude of Nature

ture for contentment? Our appetite is truely unreasonable, neither will know any bounds: We begin with necessaries, as *Pliny* justly observes, and from thence we rise to excess, punishing our selves with our own wild desires; whereas, if we were wise, we might find mediocrity an ease. *Plin. l. 25. c. 6.*

Either extream is a like deadly; he that over afflicts his body, kills a Subject; he that pampers it, nourishes an Enemy. Too much abstinence turns vice, and too much ingurgitation is one of the seven, and at once destroyes both Nature and Grace. The best measure of having or desiring, is not what we would, but what we *Hugo. Instit. Mona. Reg. S. Columb.* *Senec. Epist. 88.*

we ought: Neither is he rich that hath much; but he that desires not much: A discreet frugality is fittest to moderate both our wishes, and expences; which if we want, we prove dangerously prodigal in both; if we have, we do happily improve our stock to the advantage of our selves, and others.

## SECT. XIV.

*Considering the inconveniences, and miseries of discontentment.*

THe next inducement to *Contentation*, shall be the serious consideration of the miserable inconveniences

ces of the contrary disposition; Discontentment is a mixture of anger, and of grief; both which are wont to raise up fearful tempests in the Soul; He teareth himself in his anger, saith *Bildad*, concerning that mirrour of patience; And the sorrow of the World worketh death, saith the chosen vessel: so as the Male-content, whether he be angry or sad, mischieves himself both wayes; There cannot be a truer word then that of wise *Solomon*, Anger resteth in the bosom of fooles; What can be more foolish then for a man, because he thinks God hath made him miserable by crosses, to make himself more miserable by his

Job 18. 4.

Eccles. 7. 9.

his own diſtempers; If the clay had ſenſe, what a mad thing were it for it to ſtruggle with the Potter? and if a man will ſpurn againſt ſtrong Iron-pikes, what can he hope to carry away but wounds? How witleſs a thing it is for a man to torment himſelf with the thoughts of thoſe evils, that are paſt all remedy? What wiſe beholder would not have ſmiled with pitty and ſcorn, to have ſeen great *Auguſtus*, after the defeat of ſome choyce troopes, to knock his head againſt the Wall, and to hear him paſſionately cry out; *O Varus*, reſtore me my loſt Legions? Who would not have been angry with that cholerick

Pro-

Prophet to hear him ſo furiouſly conteſt with his maker for a withered Gourd? What an affliction was it to good *Jacob* (more then the ſterility of a beloved wife) to hear *Rachel* ſay; Give me Children, or elſe I dye? Gen.30.1. yea, how ill did it ſound in the mouth of the Father of the Faithful; Lord God, what wilt thou give me, ſeeing I go Childleſs? Gen.15.2. Yet thus froward and techy is nature in the beſt; if we may not have all we would have, all that we have is nothing; if we be not perfectly humored, we are willfully unthankful; All *Iſrael* is nothing worth to *Ahab*, if he may not have one poor Vineyard: How

must this needs irritate a munificent God to see his bounty contemned out of a childish pettishness? How can he forbear to take away from us his sleighted Mercies? How can he hold his hand from plaguing so ingrateful disrespects of his Favours?

As for that other passion of grief, what woful work doth it make in ungoverned minds? How many have we known, that out of thought for unrecoverable losses, have lost themselves? how many have run from their wits? how many from their lives? Yea, how many, that out of an impatience to stay the leasure of vengeance, have made their own

own hands, their hasty Executioners? And even where this extremity prevails not, look about, and ye shall see men that are not able matches to their passions, wofully macerating themselves with their own thoughts, wearing out their tedious days upon the rack of their own hearts; and making good that observation of the wise man; By the sorrow of the heart, the spirit is broken. Pro. 15. 13.

Now all these mischiefs might have been hapily prevented by a meek yieldance of our selfs to the hands of an All-Wise, and an All-Merciful God, and by an humble composure of our affections to a quiet suffe-

ring; It is the power of patience to calm the heart in the moſt bluſtering trials; and when the veſſel is moſt toſſed, yet to ſecure the fraight: This, if it do not abate of our burden, yet it addes to our ſtrength, and wins the Father of Mercies both to pitty, and retribution.

Pſ. 37.7. Jam.5.7.

Whereas murmuring *Iſraelites* can never be free from judgments; and it is a dreadful word that God ſpeaketh of that choſen Nation; Mine heritage is unto me as a Lion in the foreſt, it, ſtill, yelleth againſt me, therefore have I hated it. A Child that ſtruggles under the rod, juſtly doubles his ſtripes, and

Jer. 12. 8.

an

an unruly Malefactor draws on, beſides Death, tortures.

## SECT. XV.

### *Conſider the viciſſitudes of Favours and Afflictions.*

FUrthermore, it is a main help towards *Contentation*, to conſider the gracious viciſſitudes of Gods dealing with us: How he intermixes Favours with his croſſes; tempering our much hony, with ſome little gall; the beſt of us are but ſhrewd Children, yet he chides us not always, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*: he ſmiles often, for one frown; and why ſhould we not take one with another? Pſ. 103. 9.

ther? It was the answer wherewith that admirable pattern of patience stopped the querulous mouth of his tempting Wife; What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?

Job. 2. 10.

It was a memorable example which came lately to my knowledge of a worthy Christian, who had lived to his middle age in much health, and prosperity, and was now for his two last years miserably afflicted with the Strangury; who in the midst of his torments could say, Oh my Lord God, how gracious hast thou been unto me! thou hast given me eight and forty years of health, and now but

but two years of pain; thou mighteſt have cauſed me to lie in this torture all the days of my life; and now thou haſt caried me comfortably through the reſt, and haſt Mercifully taken up with this laſt parcel of my torment; bleſſed be thy Name for thy Mercy in forbearing me, and for thy juſtice in afflicting me. To be thankful for preſent bleſſings is but ordinary, but to be ſo thankful for Mercies paſt, that the memory of them ſhould be able to put over the ſenſe of preſent miſeries, is an high improvement of Grace.

The very Heathens by the light of Nature and their own experience, could ob-

ſerve this interchange of Gods proceedings; and made ſome kind of uſe of them accordingly: *Camillus*, after he had upon ten years ſiege, taken the rich City *Veios*, pray'd that ſome miſhap might befal himſelf and *Rome* to temper ſo great an happineſs; when one would have thought the prize would not countervail the labour, and the loſs of time and blood. And *Alexander* the Great, when report was made to him of many notable Victories, atchieved by his Armies, could ſay; O *Jupiter*, mix ſome miſ-fortune with theſe happy news: Lo, theſe men could tell that it is neither fit, nor ſafe for great

*Livius.*

great bleſſings to walk alone, but that they muſt be attended with their Pages, afflictions: why ſhould not we Chriſtians expect them with patience, and thanks?

They ſay, Thunder and Lightning hurts not, if it be mixed with Rain. In thoſe hot Countries, which lie under the ſcalding Zone. When the firſt ſhowres fall after a long drought, it is held dangerous to walk ſuddenly abroad; for that the earth ſo moiſtned ſends up unwholſome ſteams; but in thoſe parts where the Rain and Sun-ſhine are uſually interchanged, it is moſt pleaſant to take the air of the earth newly refreſhed with kindly ſhowres; Nei-

ther is it otherwiſe in the courſe of our lives; this medley of good and evil conduces not a little to the health of our Souls: One of them muſt ſerve to temper the other; and both of them to keep the heart in order.

Were our afflictions long, and our comforts rare and ſhort, we had yet reaſon to be thankful; the leaſt is more then God owes us: but now, when if heavineſs endure for a night, joy commeth in the morning, and dwells with us, ſo, that ſome fits of ſorrow are recompenſed with many months of joy; how ſhould our hearts overflow with thankfulneſs, and eaſily digeſt

geſt ſmall grievances, out of the comfortable ſenſe of larger bleſſings?

But if we ſhall caſt up our eyes to Heaven, and there behold the glorious remuneration of our ſufferings, how ſhall we contemn the worſt that earth can do unto us? There, there is glory enough to make us a thouſand times more then amends for all that we are capable to endure; Yea, if this Earth were Hell, and Men Devils, they could not inflict upon us thoſe torments, which might hold any equality with the glory which ſhall be revealed; and even of the worſt of them we muſt ſay with the bleſſed Apoſtle; Our light affliction

affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, eternal weight of glory: When the bleſſed Proto-Martyr *Stephen* had ſtedfaſtly fixed his eyes on Heaven, and (that Curtain being drawn) had ſeen the Heavens opened, and therein the glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding on the right hand of God; do we think he cared ought for the ſparkling eyes, and gnaſhed teeth, and killing ſtones of the enraged multitude? Oh poor impotent Jews, how far was that divine Soul above the reach of your malice? how did he triumph over your cruelty? how did he by his happy evolation make all thoſe ſtones precious? Sect.

2 Cor. 4. 17.

Acts 7.

## SECT. XVI.

*Consider the Examples of* Contentation, *both without, and within the Church of God.*

LAstly, it cannot but be a powerful motive unto *Contentation*, that we lay before us the notable Examples of men, whether worse, or better then our selves, that have been eminent in the practice of this vertue; men, that out of the meer strength of morality, have run away with losses, and Poverty as a light burden; that out of their free choice have fallen upon those conditions

ditions, which we are ready to fear, and ſhrink from: What a ſhame is it for Chriſtians to be out-ſtripped herein by very Pagans? If we look upon the ancient Philoſophers; their low valuation of theſe outward things, and their willing abdication of thoſe comforts, wherewith others were too much affected, made them admired of the multitude; Here do I ſee a Cynick houſed in his Tub, ſcorning all wealth and ſtate; and making ſtill even with his Victuals and the day; who, when he was invited to ſupper to one of *Alexanders* great Lords, could ſay; I had rather lick ſalt at *Athens*, then feaſt with

with *Craterus*: Here I meet with him, whom their Oracle ſtyled the wiſeſt of men, walking barefoot in a patcht thred-bare cloak, contemning honours, and all earthly things; and when that garment would hang no longer on his back, I can hear him ſay, I would have bought a Cloak, if I had had money; after which word, ſaith *Seneca*, whoſoever offered to give, came too late; *Apollodorus*, amongſt the reſt, ſends him a rich mantle towards his end, and is refuſed; With what Patience doth this man bear the loud ſcoldings of his *Xantippe*? making no other of them, then the creaking of a Cart-wheel: with

with what brave reſolution doth he repel the proffers of *Archelaus*, telling him how cheap the Market afforded meal at *Athens*, and the Fountains Water? Here I meet with a *Zeno*, formerly rich in his traffique for purple, now impoveriſht by an ill Sea-voyage, and can hear him ſay, I ſailed beſt when I Ship-wrackt: Here I ſee an *Ariſtippus* drowning his gold in the Sea, that it might not drown him: Here I can hear a *Democritus*, or *Cleanthes*, when he was asked how a man ſhould be rich? Anſwer, If he be poor in deſires.

What ſhould I ſpeak of thoſe Indian Sophiſts, that took

took their name from their nakedneſs; whom we hear to ſay, The Sky is our Houſe, and the Earth our Bed: we care not for Gold, we contemn Death: One of them can tell *Oneſicritus*: As the Mother is to the Child, ſo is the Earth to me: The Mother gives Milk to her Infant, ſo doth the Earth yield all neceſſaries to me: And when gold was offered to him, by that great Conquerour; Perſwade (ſaid he) if thou canſt theſe birds to take thy ſilver and gold, that they may ſing the ſweeter; and if thou canſt not do that, wouldſt thou have me worſe then them? Adding moreover in a ſtrong diſcourſe;

*Inter opera Ambroſii De moribus Brachmannorum.*

courſe; Natural hunger, when we have taken food, ceaſeth; and if the mind of man did alſo naturally deſire gold, ſo ſoon as he hath received that which he wiſhed, the deſire and appetite of it would preſently ceaſe; but ſo far is it from this ſatiety, that the more it hath, the more it doth, without any intermiſſion, long for more; becauſe this deſire proceeds not from any motion of Nature, but only out of the wantonneſs of mans own will, to which no bounds can be ſet. Bluſh, O Chriſtian Soul, (whoſoever thou art, that readeſt theſe lines) to hear ſuch words falling from Heathen lips, when thou ſeeſt

seest those that profess godliness, doat upon these worthless metals, and transported with the affectation and cares of these earthly provisions.

If from these patterns of men that should be below our selves, we look up to the more noble precedents of Prophets and Apostles; Lo, there we find *Elijah* fed by Ravens; *Elisha* boarding with his poor *Sareptan* Hostess; And an hundred Prophets fed by fifty in a Cave, with bread and water; The Sons of the Prophets for the enlarging of their over-strait lodgings, hard at work; they are their own Carpenters, but their tools are borrowed; There we shall

1 Kings 18. 13.

2 Kings 6. 2, 3, 4, 5.

ſhall find a few barly-loaves, and little fiſhes, the houſhold proviſion of our Saviours train: Yea, there we find the moſt glorious Apoſtle, the great Doctor of the Gentiles, employing his hands to feed his belly; Buſily ſtitching of skins for his Tent-work: Yea, what do we look at any or all of theſe, when we ſee the Son of God, the God of all the World, in the form of a Servant? Not a Cratch to cradle him in, not a Grave to bury him in, was his own; and he that could command Heaven and Earth, can ſay, The Foxes have holes, the Birds have neſts, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

Mat. 8. 20.

Who

Who now can complain of want, when he hears his Lord and Saviour but thus Provided for ? He could have brought down with him a Celeſtial Houſe, and have pitcht it here below, too glorious for earthen eyes to have lookt upon : He could have commanded all the precious things that lie ſhrouded in the bowels of the Earth, to have made up a Majeſtical Palace for him, to the dazling of the eyes of all beholders: He could have taken up the ſtatelieſt Court that any Earthly Monarch poſſeſſed, for his peculiar habitation: But his greatneſs was Spiritual and Heavenly : And he that owned all would have

have nothing, that he might Sanctifie want unto us; and that he might teach us by his bleſſed example, to ſit down contented with any thing, with nothing.

By that time therefore we have laid all theſe things together, and have ſeriouſly conſidered of the mean valuation of all theſe earthly things, for their tranſitorineſs, Unſatisfaction, Danger; of the over-ruling Providence of the Almighty, who moſt wiſely, juſtly, Mercifully diſpoſeth of us and all events that befall us; of the worſe condition of many thouſand others; of the great inconveniences that attend great and full eſtates; of the ſecret bene-

fits

fits of Poverty; of the ſmalneſs of that pittance that may ſuffice Nature; of the miſeries that wait upon diſcontentment; of the Merciful viciſſitudes of Favours, wherewith God pleaſeth to interchange our ſufferings; and laſtly, the great examples of thoſe, as well without, as within the boſom of the Church, that have gone before us, and led us the way to *Contentation*: our judgment cannot chuſe but be ſufficiently convinced, that there is abundant reaſon to win our hearts to a quiet and contented entertainment of want, and all other outward afflictions.

SECT.

## SECT. XVII.

### *Of Contentment in Death it ſelf.*

BUt all theſe intervenient miſeries are ſlight in compariſon of the laſt, and utmoſt of Evils, Death; Many a one grapples chearfully with theſe trivial afflictions, who yet looks Pale, and trembles at the King of Fear: His very Name hath Terrour in it, but his looks more: The courageous Champion of Chriſt, the bleſſed Apoſtle: And with him, every Faithful Soul, makes his challenge univerſal, to whatſoever Eſtate he is in; to the Eſtate of

of Death, therefore no leſs then the afflictive incidence of Life: When therefore this gaſtly Giant ſhall ſtalk forth, and bid defiance to the whole Hoſt of *Iſrael*; and when the timorous unbeleevers ſhall run away at the ſight of him, & endevour to hide their Heads from his preſence; the good Soul armed, not with the unmeet and cumberſome Harneſs of Fleſh and Blood, but with the ſure (though inviſible) armour of God, dares comes forth to meet him, and in the name of the Lord of Hoſts, both bids him battle, and foils him in the Combat; and now having laid him on the ground, can Triumphingly

ſay, O Death, where is thy ſting? O Grave, where is thy Victory? Five ſmooth pebles there are, which if we cary in our ſcrip, wee ſhall be able to quel, not only the power of Death, but the terrour too.

Whereof the firſt is a ſure apprehenſion of both the unavoidable neceſſity, and certain benefit of death: A neceſſity, grounded upon the juſt and eternal Decree of Heaven: It is appointed to all men once to die; and what a madneſs were it, for a Man to think of an exemption from the common condition of mankind? Mortality is, as it were, eſſential to our Nature; neither could we have had our

Heb. 9. 27.

Souls

Souls but upon the terms of a re-delivery, when they ſhall be called for; If the Holieſt Saints, or the greateſt Monarchs ſped otherwiſe, we might have ſome colour of repining: Now, grieve if thou wilt, that thou art a Man; grieve not, that being Man, thou muſt die.

Neither is the benefit inferiour to the neceſſity; Lo here the remedy of all our cares, the Phyſick for all our maladies, the reſcue from all our fears and dangers, earneſtly ſued for by the painful, dearly welcome to the diſtreſſed: Yea, lo here the Cherub that keeps the Gate of Paradiſe; there is no entrance, but un-

der his hand: In vain do we hope to pass to the Glory of Heaven, any other way then through the Gates of Death,

The second is the Conscience of a well-led Life; Guiltiness will make any Man cowardly, unable to look danger in the face, much more Death; whereas the innocent is bold as a Lion: What a difference therefore there is betwixt a Martyr, and a Malefactor; this latter knows he hath done ill, and therefore if he can take his Death but patiently, it is well; the former knows he hath done well, and therfore takes his Death not patiently onely, bnt chearfully.

But

But becauſe no mortal Man can have ſo innocently led his Life, but that he ſhall have paſſed many offences againſt his moſt Holy and Righteous God; here muſt be, Thirdly, a final Peace firmly made betwixt God and the Soul. Two Powerful Agents muſt mediate in it; a Lively Faith, and a ſerious Repentance; for thoſe Sins can never appear againſt us, that are waſhed off with our tears; and being juſtified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Now, if we have made the Judge our Friend, what can the Sergeant do? Rom. 5. 1.

The fourth is the Power, and efficacy of Chriſts

Death applyed to the Soul: Wherefore dyed he, but that we might Live? Wherefore would he, who is the Lord of Life, die, but to ſanctifie, ſeaſon, and ſweeten death to us? Who would go any other way then his Saviour went before him? Who can fear that enemy, whom his Redeemer hath Conquered for him? Who can run away from that Serpent, whoſe ſting is pulled out? Oh Death! my Saviour hath been thy Death, and therefore thou canſt not be mine.

The fifth, is the comfortable expectation, and aſſurance of a certain reſurrection, and an immediate Glory: I do but lay me down to my

my reſt, I ſhall ſleep quietly, and riſe glorioufly: My Soul, in the mean time, no ſooner leaves my body, then it enjoys God; It did lately through my bodily Eyes ſee my ſad Friends, that bad me farewel with their Tears; now it hath the bliſſe-making Viſion of God: I am no ſooner ianched forth, then I am at the Haven, where I would be; Here is that which were able to make amends for a thouſand Deaths; a Glory, Infinite, Eternal, Incomprehenſible.

This Spiritual Ammunition ſhall ſufficiently furniſh the Soul for her encounter with her laſt Enemy; ſo as ſhe ſhall not only endure, but long for this Combat;

and say with the chosen Vessel, I desire to depart, & to be with Christ.

Phil. 1. 23.

## SECT. XVIII.

*The miseries and inconveniences of the continued conjunction of the Soul & Body.*

NOw for that long conversation causeth entireness, and the parting of Old Friends and Partners (such the Soul and Body are) cannot but be grievous, although there were no actual pain in the dissolution: It will be requisite for us, seriously to consider the state of this conjunction; & to enquire what good offices the one of them doth to the

the other, in their continued union; for which they ſhould be ſo loth to part: And here we ſhall find that thoſe two, however united to make up one Perſon, yet (as it fals out in Croſs matches) they are in continual domeſtique jars one with the other, and entertain a ſecret familiar kind of Hoſtility betwixt themſelves; For the Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh, and theſe are contrary the one to the other. Gal. 5. 17.

One ſays well, that if the Body ſhould implead the Soul, it might bring many foul impeachments againſt it; and ſue it for many great injuries done to that Earthly part: And the Soul again

hath no fewer quarrels againſt the Body: Betwixt them both there are many brawles, no Agreement. Our Schools have reckoned up therefore eight main incommodities, which the Soul hath cauſe to compla'n of in her conjunction with the Body: whereof the firſt is the defilement of Original Sin, wherewith the Soul is not tainted as it proceeds, alone, from the pure hands of its Creator, but as it makes up a part of a Son of *Adam*, who brought this guilt upon Humane nature; ſo as now this compoſition, which we call Man, is corrupt: Who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean? Saith *Job*. The

Job. 14. 4.

The ſecond is a proneneſs to Sin, which, but by the meeting of theſe partners had never been; the Soul, if ſingle, would have been innocent; thus matched, what Evil is it not apt to entertain? An ill conſort is enough to poyſon the beſt diſpoſition.

The difficulty of doing well is the third; for how averſe are we by this conjunction from any thing that is good; This clog hinders us from walking roundly in the ways of God: The good that I would do, I do not, ſaith the choſen Veſſel. Rom. 7. 19.

The fourth is the dulneſs of our underſtanding, and the dimneſs of our mental

mental Eyes, especially in the things pertaining unto God; which now we are forced to behold through the vail of Flesh: If therefore we mis-know, the fault is in the mean, through which we do imperfectly discover them.

The fifth is a perpetual impugnation, and self-conflict, either part labouring to oppose and vanquish the other. This field is fought in every mans bosom, without any possibility of peace, or truce, till the last moment of dissolution.

The sixth is the racking solicitude of cares, which continually distract the Soul, not Suffering it to rest at ease, whiles it carries this

Flesh

Fleſh about it.

The ſeventh is the multiplicity of paſſions which daily bluſter within us, and raiſe up continual Tempeſts in our Lives, diſquieting our Peace, and threatning our Ruine.

The eight is the retardation of our Glory; for Fleſh, and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; we muſt lay down our load if we would enter into Heaven: The ſeed cannot fructifie unleſs it Die. I cannot blame Nature if it could wiſh not to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon: But ſo hath the Eternal Wiſdom Ordered, that we ſhould firſt lay down, ere we can take up; and be de- 2 Cor. 5.4.

deveſted of Earth, ere we can partake of Heaven.

Now then, ſith ſo many & great diſcommodities do ſo unavoidably accompany this match of Soul & Body, and all of them ceaſe inſtantly in the act of their diſſolution; what reaſon have we to be too deeply affected with their parting? Yea, how ſhould we rather rejoyce that the Hour is come, wherein we ſhall be quit both of the Guilt, and Temptations of Sin; wherein the clogg ſhall be taken away from our heels, and the vail from our Eyes; wherein no inteſtine Wars ſhall threaten us, no cares ſhall diſquiet us, no paſſions ſhall torment us; and laſtly, where-

wherein we may take the free poſſeſſion of that Glory, which we have hitherto lookt at only a far off from the top of our *Piſgah?*

## SECT. XIX.

### *Holy diſpoſitions for Contentment: And firſt, Humility.*

HItherto, we have dwelt in thoſe Powerful conſiderations which may work us to a quiet Contentment with whatſoever adverſe eſtate, whether of Life or Death; after which, we addreſs our ſelves to thoſe meet diſpoſitions, which ſhall render us fully capable of this bleſſed *Contentation*; and ſhall make all theſe

these considerations effectual to that happy purpose. Whereof the first is true Humility, undervaluing our selves, and setting an high rate upon every Mercy that we receive; For, if a Man have attained unto this, that he thinks every thing too good for him, and himself less then the least Blessing, and worthy of the heaviest judgment; he cannot but sit down thankful for small Favours, & meekly content with mean afflictions: As contrarily, the proud Man stands upon points with his Maker, makes God his debter; looks disdainfully at small Blessings; as if he said, What, no more? and looks angerly

ly at the leaſt croſſes; as if he ſaid, Why thus much? The Father of the Faithful hath practically taught us this Leſſon of humility, who comes to God with duſt and aſhes in his mouth: And the Jewiſh Doctors tell us truly, that in every Diſciple of *Abraham*, there muſt be three things: a good eye, a meek ſpirit, and an humble ſoule; His Grand-child *Jacob*, the Father of every true Iſraelite, had well taken it out; whiles he can ſay to his God, I am not worthy of the leaſt of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou haſt ſhewed unto thy ſervant: And indeed, in whomſoever it be, the beſt meaſure *of* Grace

Gen. 18. 27

*Pirke Avoth.*

Gen. 32. 10

Grace is Humility; for the more Grace ſtill, the greater Humility; and no Humility, no Grace: *Solomon* obſerved of old; and Saint *James* took it from him. That God reſiſteth the proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble; ſo as he that is not humble, is not ſo much as capable of Grace; and he that is truly Humble, is a fit ſubject for all Graces, and amongſt the reſt, for the Grace of *Contentation*: Give me a man therefore, that is vile in his own Eyes, that is ſenſible of his own wretchedneſs, that knows what it is to Sin, and what belongs to that Sin whereof he is guilty; this Man ſhall think it a Mercy that

Pro. 3. 34.

Jam. 4. 6.

that he is any where out of Hell; ſhall account all the evils that he is free from, ſo many new Favours; ſhall reckon eaſie corrections amongſt his bleſſings, & ſhall eſteem any bleſſing infinitely obliging. Whereas contrarily, the proud beggar is ready to throw Gods almes at his Head, and ſwels at every laſh, that he receives from the Divine Hand. Not without great cauſe therefore doth the Royal Preacher oppoſe the patient in Spirit, to the proud in Spirit; for the proud Man can no more be patient, then the patient can be diſcontent with whatſoever hand of his God. Every toy puts the proud Man beſide his pati-

Patience; If but a flie be found in *Pharaohs* cup, he is ſtraight in rage, (as the Jewiſh tradition lays the quarrel) and ſends his Butler into durance: And if the Emperour do but miſtake the Stirrup of our Countrey-Man Pope *Adrian*, he ſhall dance attendance for his Crown: If a *Mardochee* do but fail of a courteſie to *Haman*, all Jews muſt bleed to Death; And how unquiet are our vain Dames, if this curle be not ſet right, or that Pin be mis-placed? But the meek Spirit is incurious; and ſo throughly ſubacted, that he takes his load from God (as the Camel from his Maſter) upon his knees: And for Men, if they

they compell him to goe one mile, he goes twain; if they ſmite him on the right cheek, he turns the other, if they ſue away his Coat, he parts with his Cloake alſo

Mat. 5. 39. 40.

*Heraclius* the Emperour, when he was about to paſſe through the golden gate, & to ride in Royal State through the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, being put in mind by *Zacharias* the Biſhop there, of the humble and dejected faſhion wherein his Saviour walked through thoſe ſtreets, towards his paſſion, ſtrips off his rich robes, lays aſide his Crown, and with bare head, and bare feet, ſubmiſsly paces the ſame way that his Redeemer

deemer had carried his Croſs towards his *Golgotha*. Every true Chriſtian is ready to tread in the deep ſteps of his Saviour, as well knowing that if he ſhould deſcend to the Gates of Death, of the Grave, of Hell, he cannot be ſo humbled, as the Son of God was for him: And indeed, this, and this alone, is the true way to Glory; He that is Truth it ſelf, hath told us, that he who humbles himſelf ſhall be exalted; Pro.85.33. And wiſe *Solomon*, Before Honour is Humility. The Fuller treads upon that cloth which he means to whiten: And he that would ſee the Stars by day, muſt not climbe up into ſome high

high Mountain, but muſt deſcend to the lower Cells of the earth. Shortly, whoſoever would raiſe up a firm building of *Contentation*, muſt be ſure to lay the foundation in Humility.

## SECT. XX.

### *Of a Faithful Self-reſignation.*

SEcondly, to make up a true Contentment with the moſt adverſe eſtate, there is required a Faithfull Self-reſignation into the hands of that God, whoſe we are; who, as he hath more right in us, then our ſelves, ſo he beſt knows what to do with us: How graciouſly hath

hath his mercy invited us to our own eaſe? Be careful (ſaith he) for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and ſupplication, with thankſgiving, let your requeſts be made known unto God: we are naturally apt in our neceſſities to have recourſe to greater powers then our own; even where we have no engagement of their help; how much more ſhould we caſt our ſelves upon the Almighty, when he not only allows, but ſolicits our reliance upon him? It was a queſtion that might have befitted the mouth of the beſt Chriſtian, which fell from *Socrates*, Since God himſelf is careful for thee, why art thou

Phil 4.6.

thou ſolicitous for thy ſelf? If evils were let looſe upon us, ſo as it were poſſible for us to ſuffer any thing that God were not aware of, we might have juſt cauſe *to ſink* under adverſities; but now, that we know every dram of our affliction is weighed out to us, by that all-wiſe, and all-merciful Providence; Oh our infidelity, if we doe make ſcruple of taking in the moſt bitter doſe! Here then is the right uſe of that main duty of Chriſtianity, to live by faith: Brute creatures live by ſenſe, meer men by reaſon, Chriſtians by faith. Now faith is the ſubſtance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not ſeen; In our extremi-

Heb. 11. 1.

ties we hope for Gods gracious deliverance, faith gives a ſubſiſtence to that deliverance, before it be: The mercies that God hath reſerved for us, do not yet ſhow themſelves; faith is the evidence of them, though yet unſeen: It was the Motto of the learned and godly Divine Mr. *Perkins*, *Fidei vita vera vita*; The true life, is the life of faith; a word which that worthy ſervant of God did both write and live; neither indeed is any other life truly vital, but this; for hereby we enjoy God in all whatever occurrences: Are we abridged of means? we feed upon the cordial Promiſes of our God: Do we ſigh

ſigh and groan under varieties of grievous perſecutions? out of the worſt of them we can pick out comforts; whiles we can hear our Saviour ſay, Bleſſed are they which are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake; for theirs is the Kingdome of Heaven; Are we deſerted, and abandoned of friends? we ſee him by us, who hath ſaid, I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee: Do we droop under ſpiritual deſertions? we hear the God of truth ſay, For a ſmall moment have I forſaken thee, but with great mercy will I gather thee; In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, but with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy

Mat. 5.10.

Heb. 13. 5.

Eſa. 54. 7, 8.

on thee, ſaith the Lord, thy Redeemer: Are we driven from home? If we take the wings of the morning, and
Pſal. 139. 8, 9. remain in the uttermoſt parts of the Sea; even there alſo ſhall thine hand lead us, and thy right hand ſhall hold us: Are we dungeoned up from the ſight of the Sun? Peradventure the darkneſs ſhall cover us; but then ſhall our night be turned into day; yea, the darkneſs
ver. 10, 11 is no darkneſs with thee: Are we caſt down upon the bed of ſickneſs? He that is our God, is the
Pſ. 68. 20. God of ſalvation; and unto God the Lord belong the iſſues from death.

It cannot be ſpoken how injurious thoſe men are to them-

themſelves, that will be managing their own cares, and plotting the prevention of their fears; and projecting their own, both indemnity, and advantages; for, as they lay an unneceſſary load upon their own ſhoulders, ſo they draw upon themſelves the miſeries of an unremediable diſappointment; Alas, how can their weakneſs make good thoſe events which they vainly promiſe to themſelves, or avert thoſe judgments they would eſcape, or uphold them in thoſe evils they muſt undergoe? Whereas if we put all this upon a gracious God, he contrives it with eaſe; looking for nothing from us, but our truſt, and thankfulneſs.

## SECT. XXI.
### *Of True inward Riches.*

IN the third place, it will be moſt requiſit to furniſh the ſoul with true inward riches; I mean not of meer moral vertues, (which yet are *truly precious* when they are found in a good heart) but of a wealth as much above them, as gold is above droſs; Yea, as the thing which is moſt precious, is above nothing: And this ſhall be done, if we bring Chriſt home to the ſoul; if we can poſſeſs our ſelves of him, who is God al-ſufficient; For ſuch infinite contentment there is in the Son of God made ours, that who-

whoſoever hath taſted of the ſweetneſs of this comfort is indifferent to all earthly things; and inſenſible of thoſe extream differences of events, wherewith others are perplexed; How can he be dejected with the want of any thing, who is poſſeſſed of him that poſſeſſeth all things? How can he be over-affected with trivial profits, or pleaſures, who is taken up with the God of all comfort? Is Chriſt mine therefore? How can I fail of all contentment? How can he complain to want light, that dwels *in the* midſt of the Sun? How can he complain of thirſt, out of whoſe belly flow rivers of living water? What can

Joh. 7. 38.

I wish, that my Christ is not to me? Would I have meat and drink? My flesh is meat indeed; and my blood is drink indeed: Would I have cloathing? But, put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, saith the Apostle: Would I have medicine? He is the Tree of life, the leaves whereof are for the healing of the Nations: Would I have safety, and protection? He truly is my strength, and my salvation; he is my defence, so as I shall not fall; in God is my health and my glory; the Rock of my might, and in God is my trust: Would I have direction? I am the way, and the truth: Would I have life? Christ is to me

Joh. 6. 55.

Rom. 13. 14.

Rev. 22. 2.

Ps. 62. 6, 7.

Phil. 1. 27.

me to live; I am the Resurrection and the Life; Would I have all spiritual good things? We are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdome, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.

Joh. 11. 25.

1 Cor. 1. 30.

Oh the happy condition of the man that is in Christ, and hath Christ in him! Shall I account him rich, that hath store of Oxen, and Sheep, and Horses, and Camels; that hath heaps of metals, and some spots of ground? and shall I not account him infinitely more rich, that owns and enjoyes him whose the earth is, and the fulnesse of it; whose Heaven is, and

the glory of it? Shall I justly account that man great, whom the King will honor, and place near to himself; and shall I not esteem that man more honourable, whom the King of Heaven is pleased to admit unto such Partnership of glory, as to profess; To him that overcommeth will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne?

Rev. 3.23.

It is a true word of Saint *Augustine*, that every soul is either Christs Spouse, or the Devils Harlot: Now if we be matched to Christ, the Lord of glory; what a blessed union is here? What

What can he withhold from us, that hath given us himſelf? I could envy the devotion of that man (though otherwiſe miſ-placed) whom S. *Bernard* heard to ſpend the night in no other words then, *Deus meus & omnia*; My God, and all things; Certainly, he who hath that God, hath more then all things; he that wants him (whatever elſe he ſeems to poſſeſs) hath leſs then nothing.

## SECT. XXII.

Rom. 7. 19.

*Holy reſolutions:* 1. *That our preſent eſtate is beſt for us.*

AFter theſe ſerious conſiderations, and meet diſpoſitions

positions, shall in the last follow certain firm resolutions for the full actuating our contentment: And first, we must resolve (out of the infallible grounds of divine Providence, formerly spoken of) that the present estate wherein weare, is certainly the best for us; and therefore we must herein absolutely captivate our understanding, and will, to that of the highest: How unmeet Judges are flesh and blood of the best fitness of a condition for us? As some palates (which are none of the wholsomest) like nothing but *sweet meats*, so our nature would be fed up with the only delicacies of pleasures, and prosperity; according

according to the falſe principle of *Arriſtippus*, that he only is Happy, which is delighted; but the All-wiſe *God* knows another diet more fit for our Health, and therefore graciouſly *tempers our* diſhes with the tart ſauces of affliction: The Mother of the two Sons of *Zebedee*, and her ambitious Children, are all for the chief Peerage in the Temporal Kingdom of Chriſt; but he calls them to a bitter Cup, and a bloody Baptiſm rather; and this was a far greater Honour then that they ſued for: There is no Earthly Eſtate abſolutely good for all Perſons; like as no gale can ſerve for all Paſſengers. In *Africk*, they ſay, the North

North wind brings Clouds, and the South wind clears up: That plant which was ſtarved in one Soil, in another proſpers; Yea, that which in ſome climate is poyſon, proves wholſome in another: Some one Man if he had another's bleſſings, would run wild; and if he had ſome other Mans Croſſes, would be deſperate; The infinite wiſdom of the great Governour of the World allots every one his due proportion; The fitches are not threſhed with a threſhing inſtrument; neither is a Cart-wheel turned about upon the Cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a ſtaff, and the Cummin with a rod, ſaith *Eſay*. And

Eſa. 28. 27.

no

no otherwiſe in matter of proſperity; *Joſephs* Coat may be party-coloured, and *Benjamins* meſs may be five times ſo much as any of his Brethren. It is marvel if they who did ſo much envy *Joſeph* for his dream of Superiority, did not alſo envy *Benjamin* for ſo large a ſervice, and ſo Rich gifts at his parting; this it ſeems gave occaſion for the good *Patriarchs* fear, when he charged them, *See that you fall not out by the way*; But there had been no reaſon for ſo impotent an envy; whiles the gift is free, and each ſpeeds above his deſert, who can have cauſe to repine? It is enough that *Joſeph* knew a juſt reaſon of

Gen. 43. 34.

Gen. 45. 24.

of ſo unequal a diſtribution, though it were hidden from themſelves. The Elder Brother may grudge the fat Calf, and the prime Robe to the returned Unthrift, but the Father knows reaſon to make that difference. God is Infinitely juſt, and Infinitely Merciful in diſpenſing both his Favours and Puniſhment. In both kinds every Man hath that which is fitteſt for him, becauſe it is that which Gods will hath deſigned to him; and that will is the moſt abſolute rule of juſtice: Now if we can ſo frame our will to his, as to think ſo too, how can we be other then Contented? Do we Suffer? There is more intended to

us then our ſmart: It was a good ſpeech of *Seneca*, though an Heathen, (what pity it is that he was ſo?) I give thanks to my infirmity, which forces me not to be able to do that, which I ought not will to do; If we loſe without, ſo as we gain within; if in the periſhing of the outward Man, the inward Man be renued, we have no cauſe to complain, much to rejoyce: Do I Live in a mean Eſtate? If it were better, I ſhould be worſe; more proud, more careleſs; and what a woful improvement were this? What a ſtrange Creature would Man be, if he were what he would wiſh himſelf? Surely, he would be

2Cor.4.16.

be wickedly pleasant, carelessly Prophane, vainly proud, proudly oppressive, dissolutely wanton, impetuously self-willed; and shortly, his own Idol, and his own Idolater; His Maker knows how to frame him better; it is our ignorance and unthankfulness, if we submit not to his good pleasure: To conclude, we Pray every day, *Thy will be done*; What Hypocrites are we, if we Pray one thing, and Act another? If we murmur at what we wish? All is well between Heaven and us, if we can think our selves Happy to be what God will have us.

SECT.

## SECT. XXIII.

### *Two Resolutions to abate of our desires.*

SEcondly, we must resolve to abate of our desires; for it is the illimitedness of our ambitious, and covetous thoughts, that is guilty of our unquietness; Every Man would be, and have more then he is; and is therefore Sick of what he is not. It was a True word of *Democritus*, If we desire not much, we shall think a little much: And it is futable to one of the rules of S. *Augustine*; It is better to need less, then to have more: *Paul*, the richest Poor man, (as *Ambrose* well) could

*Ambros. de vitiorum & virtutum conflictu.*

could say, As having all things, yet possessing nothing: It is not for a Christian to be of the Dragons temper, which they say is so ever thirsty, that no water will quench his drought; and therefore never hath his mouth shut; nor, with the daughters of the Horseleach to cry always, Give, Give; He must confine his desires; and that, to no over large compass; and must say to them, as God doth to the Sea, Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further; and here shall thy proud Waves be stayed.

Pro.30.15.

Job.38.11.

What a cumber it is for a Man to have too much? to be in the case of *Surena* the Parthian Lord; that could

could never remove his Family with leſs then a thouſand Camels? What is this, but Tortoiſe-like, to be clogg'd with a weighty ſhel, which we cannot drag after us, but with pain? Or like the Oſtrich, to be ſo held down with an heavy body, that we can have no uſe of our Wings? Whereas the nimble Lark riſes,& mounts with eaſe, and Sings chearfully in her flight. How many have we known, that have found too much fleſh a burden? And when they have found their Blood too rank, have been glad to pay for the letting it out? It was the word of that old and famous Lord Keeper *Bacon*, the eminent Head of a

a noble, and witty family, *Mediocria firma:* There is neither safety, nor true pleasure in excess: It was a wise and just answer of *Zeno* the Philosopher, who reproving the superfluity of a Feast, and hearing by way of defence that the Maker of it was a great Rich Man, and might well spare it, said; If thy Cook shall over-salt thy broth, and when he is chid for it, shall say, I have store enough of Salt lying by me, wouldst thou take this for a fair answer?

P.o.24.13. My Son, eat thou honey, saith *Solomon*; because it is good: But, to be sure, for the preventing all immoderation, he adds soon after;

Pro.25.16. Hast thou found Hony? Eat so

so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith: If our appetite cary us too far, we may easily surfet; this (which is the emblem of Pleasure) must be tasted (as *Dionysius* the Sophist said of old) on the tip of the Finger; not be sup't up in the hollow of the hand; It is with our desires, as it is with weak Stomachs, the quantity offends, even where the Food is not unwholsome; and if heed be not taken, one bit draws on another, till Nature be overlaid; Both Pleasures and profits (if way be given to them) have too much power to debauch the mind, and to work it to a kind of insatiableness; there is a thirst that

Pro. 25. 16.

that is cauſed with drunkenneſs; and the wanton appetite, like as they ſaid of *Meſſalina*, may be wearied, but cannot be ſatisfied; It is good therefore to give auſtere repulſes to the firſt overtures of inordinate deſires, and to give ſtrong denials to the firſt unruly motions of our Hearts; For, S. *Chryſoſtome* well; Pleaſure is like a Dog, which being coyed, and ſtroaked, follows us at the Heels, but if rated, and beaten off, is driven away from us with eaſe.

It is for the Chriſtian Heart to be taken up with other deſires ſuch as wherein there can be no danger of immoderateneſs: Theſe are the

the Holy longings after grace and goodneſs; This only Covetouſneſs, this ambition is pleaſing to God, and Infinitely beneficial to the Soul. *Bleſſed are they which Hunger and Thirſt after Righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled:* Spiritual Bleſſings are the true Riches, whereof we can never have enough. S. *Ambroſe* ſaid truly, No Man is indeed wealthy, that cannot carry away what he hath with him: What is left behind, is not ours, but other Mens; Contemn thou whiles thou art alive, that which thou canſt not enjoy when thou art Dead.

Mat. 5. 6.

*Ambroſ. Epiſt.* 27.

As for this Earthly traſh, and the vain delights of the

fleſh, which we have ſo fondly doted on; we cannot carry *them* indeed away with us, but the ſting of the guilty mis-enjoying of them will be ſure to ſtick by us; and, to our ſorrow, attend us both in Death and Judgment: In ſumm therefore, if we would be truly Contented, & Happy, our Hearts can never be enough enlarged in our deſires of Spiritual and Heavenly things, never too much contracted in our deſires of Earthly.

SECT.

## SECT. XXIV.

3. *A Resolution to inure our selves to digest smaller discontentments.*

OUr Third Resolution must be to inure our selves to digest smaller Discontentments; and by the exercise thereof, to enable our selves for greater: As those that drink Medicinal Waters, begin First with smaller quantities, & by degrees arise, at last, to the highest of their prescribed measure; or as the wise *Lacedemonians*, by early scourgings of their Boys, inured them in their riper Years to more painful Sufferings: A strong *Milo* takes up his Calf

at first, and by continual practice is now able to cary it when it is grown a Bull.

Such is our self-love, that we affect ever to be served of the best; and that we are apt to take great exceptions at small failings: We would walk always in smooth and even Paths, and would have no hinderances in our passage; but, there is no remedy, we must meet with rubs; and perhaps cross shinnes, and take falls too in our way: Every one is willing and desirous to enjoy (as they say the City of *Rhodes* doth) a perpetual Sunshine; but we cannot (if we be Wise) but know, that we must meet with change of weather; with rainy days, & some-

ſometimes ſtorms and tempeſts; it muſt be our wiſdom to make Proviſion accordingly: And ſome whiles to abide a wetting; that, if need be, we may endure a drenching alſo. It was the policy of *Jacob*, when he was to meet with his Brother *Eſau* (whom he feared an Enemy, but found a Friend) to ſend the droves firſt, then his Hand-maids, and their Children; then *Leah*, with her Children, and at laſt, came *Joſeph* and *Rachel*; as one that would adventure the leſs dear in the firſt place, and (*if it muſt be*) to prepare himſelf for his deareſt loſs. S. *Pauls* companions in his perilous Sea-voyage, firſt lighten the Ship

Gen. 32. 26. & 33. 5, 6. &c.

Act. 27. 18, 19.

of leſs neceſſaries, then they caſt out the tackling, then the Wheat; and in the laſt place, themſelves. It is the uſe that wiſe *Socrates* made of the ſharp Tongues of his croſs and unquiet Wives, to prepare his patience for publique Sufferings. Surely, he that cannot endure a frown, will hardly take a blow; and he that doubles under a light Croſs, will ſink under a heavier; and contrarily, that good Martyr prepares his whole Body for the Faggot, with burning his Hand in the Candle. I remember *Seneca*, in one of his Epiſtles, rejoyces much to tell with what patient temper he took it, that comming inexpectedly to his Country-

Countrey-Houſe, he found all things ſo diſcompoſed, that no proviſion was ready for him; finding more contentment in his own quiet apprehenſion of theſe wants, then trouble in that unreadineſs: And thus, ſhould we be affected upon all occaſions; Thoſe that promiſed me help, have diſappointed me: That Friend, on whom I relyed, hath failed my truſt: The ſumm that I expected, comes not in at the day: My Servant ſlackens the buſineſs injoyned him: The Beaſt that I eſteemed highly, is loſt: The Veſſel in which I ſhipped ſome commodities, is wrackt: My diet and attendance muſt be abated; I muſt be diſlodg-

ed of my former habitation; how do I put over these occurrences? If I can make light work of these lesser Crosses, I am in a good posture to entertain greater.

To this purpose, it will be not a little expedient, to thwart our appetite in those things wherein we placed much delight; and to torture our curiosity in the delay of those Contentments, which we too eagerly affected: It was a noble and exemplary Government of these passions, which we find in King *David*, who being extreamly thirsty, and longing for a speedy refreshment, could say; *Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the Well of Bethlehem!*

2 Sam. 23. 15, 16, 17.

*hem!* but when he ſaw that Water purchaſed with the hazard of the lives of three of his Worthies, when it was brought to him, he would not drink it, but poured it out unto the Lord.

Have I a mind to ſome one curious diſh above the reſt? I will put my knife to my Throat, and not humour my Palate ſo far as to taſte of it: Do I receive a Letter of News from a farr Countrey, over-night? It ſhall keep my pillow warm till the morning: Do my importunate *recreations* call me away? They ſhall, againſt the hair, be forcibly adjourned till a further leiſure: Out of this ground it was, that the ancient Vo-

taries obſerved ſuch auſterity, and rigor in their *Diet*, Clothes, Lodging; as thoſe that knew how requiſite it is that Nature ſhould be held ſhort of her demands; & *continually* exerciſed with denials, leſt ſhee grow too wanton, and impetuous in her deſires: That which was of old given as a rule to Monaſtick Perſons, is fit to be extended to all Chriſtians; They may not have a Will of their own, but muſt frame themſelves to ſuch a condition, and cariage, as ſeems beſt to their Superiour; If therefore it pleaſe my God to ſend me ſome little Comfort, I ſhall take that as an earneſt of more; and if he exerciſe me with

with leſſer Croſſes, I ſhall take them as preparatives to greater; and endeavour to be thankful for the one, and patient in the other; and contented with Gods hand in both.

## SECT. XXV.

### 4. *A Reſolution to be frequent and fervent in Prayer.*

OUr laſt Reſolution muſt be, to be frequent and fervent in our Prayers to the Father of all Mercies, that he will be pleaſed to Work our Hearts by the Power of his Spirit, to this conſtant ſtate of *Contentation*; without which we can neither conſider the things that belong

long to our inward Peace, nor dispose our selves towards it, nor resolve ought for the effecting it; without which, all our Considerations, all our Dispositions, all our Resolutions, are vain and fruitless. Justly therefore doth the blessed Apostle, after his charge of avoiding all Carefulness for these earthly things, enforce the necessity of our Prayers and Supplications, and making our requests known unto God; who both knows our need, and puts these requests into our Mouths: When we have all done, they are the requests of our Hearts, that must free them from cares, and frame them to a perfect Con-

Phil. 4. 6.

Contentment: There may be a kind of dull and ſtupid neglect, which poſſeſſing the Soul may make it inſenſible of Evil Events, in ſome natural diſpoſitions; but a true temper of a quiet and peaceable eſtate of the Soul upon good grounds can never be attained without the inoperation of that Holy Spirit, from whom every good gift, and every perfect giving proceedeth: It is here contrary to theſe Earthly Occaſions: With Men, he that is ever craving, is never contented; but with God, he cannot want Contentment that prays always. If we be not unacquainted with our ſelves, we are ſo conſcious of our own

Jam. 1. 17.

own weakneſs, that we know every puff of Temptation is able to blow us over; they are only our Prayers that muſt ſtay us from being carried away with the violent aſſaults of Diſcontentment; under which, a Praying Soul can no more miſcarry, then an Indevout Soul can enjoy ſafety.

## SECT. XXVI.

*The difficulty of knowing how to abound; and the ill conſequentes of not knowing it.*

LEt this be enough for the Remedy of thoſe diſtempers which ariſe from an adverſe Condition; As for

for Prosperity, every man thinks himself wise and able enough to know how to govern it, and himself in it; an happy estate (we imagine) will easily manage it self without too much care; Give me but Sea-Room, saith the confident Mariner, and let me alone, what ever tempest arise: Surely, the great Doctor of the Gentiles had never made this holy boast of his divine skill, [I know how to abound] if it had been so easie a matter as the World conceives it: Meer Ignorance, and want of Self-experience, is Guilty of this Errour.

Many a one abounds in Wealth and Honour, who abounds

no leſs in miſeries and vexation: Many a one is caried away with an unruly greatneſs, to the deſtruction of Body, Soul, Eſtate; The World abounds every where with Men that do abound, and yet do not know how to abound: And thoſe eſpecially in three ranks; The Proud, the Covetous, the Prodigal; The Proud is thereby tranſported to forget God; the Covetous, his Neighbour; the Prodigal, Himſelf.

Both Wealth and Honour are of a ſwelling Nature; raiſing a Man up not above others, but above himſelf; equalling him to the Powers Immortal; yea, exalting him above all that is called

called God; Oh that vile duſt and aſhes ſhould be raiſed to that height of Inſolence as to hold conteſtation with its Maker! Who is the Lord? Saith the King of Egypt: I ſhall be like to the Higheſt; I am, and there is none beſides me, *ſaith* the King of Babylon; *The Voice of God, and not of Man*, goes down with *Herod*: And how will that Spirit trample upon Men, that dare vie with the Almighty? Hence are all the heavy oppreſſions, Bloody Tyrannies, imperious domineerings, ſcornful inſultations, mercileſs outrages, that are ſo rife amongſt Men, even from hence, that they know not how to abound. The

Exod. 5. 2.

Eſa. 14. 14.

Act. 12. 22

The Covetous Man abounds with bags, and no leſs with ſorrows; verifying the experience of Wiſe *Solomon*; There is a ſore evil which I have ſeen under the Sun, Riches kept for the owners thereof, to their hurt; what he hath got with unjuſtice, he keeps with care, leaves with grief, and reckons for with torment; I cannot better compare theſe Money-mongers then to Bees; they are buſie gatherers, but it is for themſelves; their Maſters can have no part of their Honey till it be taken from them; and they have a ſting ready for every one that approaches their Hive; and their lot at the laſt is burning.

Eccl. 5. 13.

What

What maceration is there here with feares and jealousies; what cruel extortion and oppression exercised upon other? And all from no other ground then this, that they know not how to abound?

The Prodigal feasts and sports like an *Athenian*, spends like an Emperour; and is ready to say as *Heliogabalus* did of Old, Those Cates are best, that cost deareſt; caring more for an empty reputation of a short gallantry, then for the comfortable subsistence of himself, his Family, his Posterity: Like *Cleopes* the Vain Egyptian King, which was fain to prostitute his Daughter for the finishing of his Pyra-

*Ælius Lamprid.*

Pyramid: This Man laviſheth out not his own meanes alone, but his poor neighbours; running upon the ſcore with all Trades that concern back or belly; undoing more with his debts, then he can pleaſure with his entertainments; none of all which ſhould be done, if he knew how to abound.

Great skill therefore is required to the Governing of a plentiful and proſperous Eſtate, ſo as it may be ſafe and comfortable to the owner, and beneficial unto others; Every Corporal may know how to Order ſome few Files, but to marſhal many Troops in a Regiment, many Regiments in a whole Body of an Army, re-

quires the skill of an experienced General. But the rules and limits of Christian moderation, in the use of our Honours, Pleasures, Profits, I have at large laid forth in a former Discourse; thither I must crave leave to send the benevolent Reader; beseeching God to bless unto him these and all other Labours, to the Happy furtherance of his Grace and Salvation. *Amen.*

*FINIS.*